



MVC MEN

Striving to be humble followers of Jesus who grow up, show up, and stand up in our world.

OUR VISION AND COMMITMENT

God has a clear design for men regardless of personality, gifting, hobbies, or cultural definition. The evil one has been attacking true created manhood from the very beginning and delights to get at it continually and fervently as he heads for his ultimate defeat. He is pleased to distort the image of God through confusion, redefinition, lies, and humanistic orientation. **By God's infinite grace, we will boldly hold the line on what GOD says a man is and what we have the privilege of doing with the life we've been given.**

As Paul started concluding his first letter to Corinth, he had some specific challenging and encouraging words for men that give a clear vision for what our lives are about. In 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 he writes, **"Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. ¹⁴ Let all that you do be done in love."** Obviously, he means for all true believers to embrace these words for life but it's also clear that he intends for men to be at the front edge leading the way. He has Apollos, Stephanas, Furtunatus, Achaicus, and other brothers in mind in this immediate context and then of course, the whole church as the letter ends. Watchfulness, firm faith, strength¹, and all of life expressed in agape love are undeniable marks of a true man. This is the gospel life not exclusively for men but exemplary IN them. So, what does God intend and where did it all start?

WORKERS AND KEEPERS OF THE GARDEN

Men are at their very best when they dependently and faithfully live out their intended purpose. Paul's charge in 1 Corinthians has a ring to it that brings us all the way back to God's very familiar first intentions for man in creation. **Genesis 2:15 says, "The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it."** From the very beginning God's intentions for men were clear. Before he had clothes, before the animals were named, before Eve was with him, and before sin entered the world, God made him to be a "worker" and "keeper."

Just as God had worked to create all that is (Psalm 8:3 – the "work" of his fingers) so Adam was to reflect his image by tending to and serving the good of the garden. Just as God is the ultimate watchman over all he has made, so Adam was to reflect His image by protecting, guarding, and watching over all that was in his care. God's plan for men was for them to be cultivators and caregivers, protectors, and keepers in their spheres of life and influence (their "gardens").

But then, the first Adam failed. He didn't do the job he was given by design. When the serpent deceived Eve into disobeying God, Adam was there "with her" (Genesis 3:6) seemingly witnessing the whole thing, the whole time. He did nothing, joined in the disobedience himself, and then laid the blame on his wife and the God who gave her to him. From that point on, the world began to long for a man who would truly embrace God's created design.

¹ "Strong" - used of the young man, Jesus in Luke 1:80 – "...he became strong in spirit..." See also Ro. 4:20, Eph. 3:16, 6:10, Col. 1:11, 2 Tim. 2:1, 1 Jn 2:14, etc. This is "maturity" and perhaps even "substance" – not "strength" in a physical sense.

Fast forward several millennia, in the “2nd Adam,” Jesus, we CAN do the job. While the 1st Adam abdicated, failed humanity, and left his bride unprotected in the garden, the 2nd Adam was in a different garden embracing his mission, surrendering his will to save humanity, and preparing to redeem his bride for all eternity. This is our Lord! This is the man we follow. This is the man we constantly long to be like. The world is still longing for men who will be who they were created to be. Because of the perfect “Adam,” we can be those men! ***We will strive to be humble followers of Jesus who grow up, show up, and stand up in our world.***

MINISTRY FOCUS

1. **FAITHFULNESS** - Cultivate a deep “word dwelling richly” devotional and missional life together (accountability & focus in all the various gatherings and relationships below). This includes prayer life, reading and/or listen to God’s Word (a lot), and accountability in life, marriage, ministry, and mission (reaching others who need Jesus).
2. **COMMON CONTENT** - Embrace common content and direction (key areas uniquely relevant to men) together. For the next season through the Fall of 2023 the focus will be on key Biblical studies alongside “The Men We Need,” by Brant Hansen (Subtitle: “God’s purpose for the manly man, the avid indoorsman, and any man willing to show up.”).
3. **BROTHERHOOD – TIME TOGETHER**
 - **MVC Men’s Meetings (Breakfast or Other)** – The larger men’s gatherings (4-5 max through the year) will be focused on relationship, men’s vision, cultivating faithfulness (#1 above) and key visionary touchpoints through the Common Content (#2 above). We want men commit to these gatherings as we trust that the experience through the year will be more effective, challenging, and encouraging that way.
 - **Iron Sharpening Iron: Regular small group gatherings between men’s meetings** – The content, suggested pace, and schedule will be provided. We’ll always have a variety of group options gathering regularly to walk more deeply through the above plan. Most of these will likely be Life Group based but there will be other options as well.
4. **FALL RETREAT, 2023** – Planning, dates, and details are in the works. Let us know how you want to help! We’re forming a Men’s Retreat Team.
5. **OTHER RELATIONAL CONNECTIONS** – Hikes, sports/competition events, outings, trips, etc. Perhaps a goal of 3+ per year that men can join in as desired (plus other organic gatherings).

MVC Men's Team Needs (Key Roles) – Teams will form over time.

- 1. LEADERSHIP/TEACHING TEAM** – Coordinates and plans the overall vision and direction of MVC Men's Ministry. Assist with planning, teaching, and leading larger group times. This team is forming by invitation (must be an MVC member) and is overseen by the MVC pastors.
 - 2. SERVANT TEAM** – 5+ coordinators for MVC large group meetings (food, set up, clean up, plan and run with logistics start to finish). We need a lead coordinator for this team.
 - 3. GROUP LEADERS** – Lead men's groups for men who are not walking through things with their Life Group men. Studies are prepared and suggested pace offered (must be an MVC member).
 - 4. MEN'S RETREAT TEAM** – A group of men to plan and coordinate the Men's Fall Retreat. We need a lead coordinator for this team.
 - 5. EVENT COORDINATORS** – Plan and coordinate other events and activities for men to choose from throughout the year. These are the "captain fun" party and event planner types! These smaller events obviously provide amazing opportunity for even greater relational connection, encouragement challenge, and accountability.
 - 6. OTHER ROLES** will arise as the nose of the plane gets off the ground. Give us your thoughts.
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